THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

"No one is wholly bad, and in all lives some moments come when the vision presents itself of a worthier and happier life which might be lived. What is needed is courage to make the start, for, while life lasts, it is never too late."—E. C. BURKE.

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LIFE'S DISCIPLINE.

THE difficulty that is sometimes experienced in reconciling the love, mercy, power, and providence of Almighty God with the sorrow, suffering, and want that one almost daily meets with, afflictions which frequently seem to be undeserved, is considerable. Saddened by such conditions of life, it seems only natural to ask oneself the question, why it is that our Heavenly Father, if He is all-powerful, and at the same time full of love for His creatures here on earth, permits such calamities to overtake them.

In order to discern and comprehend the hand of Divine providence over the human family, it is necessary to remember that God is eternal, and that His purposes regarding His children on earth are also eternal, consequently His dealings with them can only be rightly judged with reference to eternal ends. His providence is over all His creatures, in every condition of their lives, whether in riches or poverty, joy or sorrow, health or sickness. We are too apt to limit God's providence to occasions when things go well with people. We often hear it said how providential it was when some person or another had been preserved from a great danger, or when something fortunate had occurred to a neighbor; but how frequently we fail to realize that this same providence is ever operating in all other conditions of life, in apparent misfortune as well as in fortune, in danger as well as in safety. The Rev. Henry Browning, in a little book of his, has made the following remark in this connection: "We must not so limit God's operation as to say that His providence was over the one man who escaped from a wreck, and not over the one hundred who

were drowned; or that it was over those who came out of the battle unwounded, and not over the thousands who were left on the field."

Life may be viewed in many aspects, but if we accept the one in which the scriptures teach us to regard it, namely, as a probationary existence, in which life's discipline is intended to bring out our characters, and to produce in us those virtues which without such discipline could never be developed, we shall see more clearly perhaps something of the wisdom of our Father in heaven in permitting us to come into contact with all the sorrow and suffering, which so frequently distress and sadden us as we journey through life.

Our own experiences tell us that our present existence is made up of both joy and sorrow, for who of us is there that has not realized our times of grief and heartache, as well as our halcyon days of gladness and sunshine. Even the young and the strong, to whom life's future ever assumes a bright and rosy aspect, are not long before they begin to realize that there are trials, sorrows, and disappointments which they have to encounter, as well as the pleasures and happiness to which they had looked forward. Life then is not made up of complete happiness, but neither is it one of unmixed misery. God, no doubt, had He so willed, could have ordained that it should be the one or the other, but inasmuch as He, as a wise and loving Father who ever has His children's best and eternal interests in view, has ordained that trials and sufferings shall form a portion of our lives on earth, it must surely be that our present conditions are the best possible to fit us for the world to come. We must then regard this life of mixed good and evil as a school in which to form our characters, and to develop those principles and virtues which will bring us into conformity with the character of our great exemplar Jesus Christ, and so prepare us for God's presence hereafter.

There could be no room for the voluntary exercise of either virtue or vice in a life of complete happiness. If there was no suffering to relieve, there could be no such virtues as compassion and fellow-feeling for our neighbors; without poverty and destitution, where would be any place for the exhibition of charity and love? and how could we learn to practise the God-like virtue of forgiving others, if there were no wrongs to forgive? It is only in the growth and exercise of such moral qualities as these and others, that we can bring ourselves into conformity with the mind that was in our Savior, and it is only when the conditions of life are such as to excite these virtuous principles in us, that we can advance along the right path. Mr. Albert Barnes, in his Commentary on St. Mark's Gospel truly says, that while professed attachment will abound in prosperity and live in sunshine, it is only genuine love that will go into the dark shades of adversity and flourish there.

It might perhaps be urged that the prevailing conditions of life would be more explicable, if suffering and want were always the result of vice, and happiness the reward of virtue. The question is, would such a life be one of probation? The fact should not be lost sight of, that in any such case the sufferings we saw around us would be those which the Divine justice had called for, and it would then be a question how far we mortal beings could be justified in assisting the sufferer, without in some measure opposing or counteracting that justice. Here then we should certainly meet with a check in the development and exercise of those very virtues which we are here to evolve and expand. It has been aptly remarked in one of the Rev. William Paley's sermons, that a state of happiness and misery, regularly following virtue and vice, would be one of retribution and not of probation or trial.

We see then that the trials of sorrow, sickness, and distress have all their special uses in the development of goodness in man, and in fitting him for the happiness of a future state. They may be properly regarded as the discipline of life, appointed by a wise Providence, with an ulterior purpose. When we show mercy to the poor, the guilty, and the wretched, we are growing like God, one of whose great attributes is mercy. Every blessing we enjoy is a proof of this fact.

While some of the suffering that we see around us does not imply punishment, there must of course be many instances of God's rebuking and chastening those who infringe the laws of divine order. Even in such cases the punishments are in no wise vindictive, but have for their object the amendment and the ultimate good of the sufferer. An earthly parent has frequently to correct his child for the latter's future welfare, and therefore we can easily understand why it is that a father, so wise and loving as Almighty God, is not slow to correct and chasten those of His children who may deserve it. St. Paul told the Hebrews that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. 12:6.) A little further on in the same chapter he added, that God chastens His children for their profit, that they might be partakers of His holiness. To quote the Rev. Henry Browning once more, "If sin did not bring punishment, to what depth of wickedness would men sink? If folly did not entail distress and suffering, how would men be ever urged to grow wise? If forgetfulness of God did not often cause us to fall, how should we learn to live in humble dependence upon Him?"

A good deal of the chastening, however, which we see around us does not indicate the workings of retributive justice upon evil-doers, but it has for its object the purifying of the spirit, the softening and beautifying of the character, and the development of a humble trust in Almighty God. It is only when we are hungry that we desire food, and it is in the same way that when we are afflicted and brought low, and find the world insufficient to

help and relieve us, we are led to turn to our Heavenly Father, and place ourselves entirely in His wise keeping. It is then, when we look up for the help that is from above, that we commence to learn the good lessons that the school of suffering and adversity teaches us. Unless such lessons were for our eternal advantage, we should not be called upon to learn them, "For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." (Lam. 3: 33).

All God's children on earth are not called upon to undergo exactly the same amount of trial and sorrow, but the impartial and all-wise Father allots to each one that which is in His wisdom most necessary for him, just as parents, school-teachers, and those who have much to do with the training of children, know by experience how it is both unwise and impossible to deal with them all precisely in the same way. The treatment that would soften one, might easily operate in exactly the reverse way with another, just because so much depends upon the character and temperament of each child. That particular treatment must be the best which will produce the desired result, and so it is that in the discipline of each one's life, that treatment must be the greatest mercy that best prepares one for heaven. Sorrow and suffering are divinely appointed teachers in this school of life; and if, in the exercise of the divine gift of freedom, men would strive to benefit by their lessons and permit their trials to humble them, and at the same time remember that they were created to live for ever, while they are to pass but a comparatively short time in this probationary existence, they could not but acknowledge that these trials, permitted by a wise and merciful Providence, were nothing less than blessings in disguise.

It was doubtless in some such faith that the inspired apostle Paul wrote, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 18.) If the purposes of God in regard to man were limited entirely to his earthly life, the latter might perhaps have some justification in complaining of what he is called upon to go through, for in that case all his trials would be inexplicable; but when he realizes the fact, that his life's discipline has for its aim and end his preparation for a future state of happiness, and that the rewards of faith and virtue are awaiting him after he has passed through this probationary existence, he will undoubtedly bow to the Divine wisdom which brings him into contact with trials and suffering as well as with joy and happiness. The poet Robert Browning, in "The Ring and the Book," says, "This life is a training and a passage;" while in the "Life and Letters" of George Eliot, she writes, "I have found already some of the sweet uses that belong to what is called trouble, which is, after all, only a deepened gaze into life."

Virtues could never have any real existence without those trials and sorrows which call them forth, consequently a life of mixed

good and evil can be the only one suitable to our present term of probation. We may rest satisfied that our trials will cease, when the purposes for which the Almighty God permits them to exist are accomplished. There never can be a crown without a cross, just as there can be no victory where there has been no conflict, and no prize if no effort has been put forth.

Instead then of folding our hands, and in our sadness wondering why guilt, sorrow, and suffering are permitted in the world, let us accept them as necessary to our present existence, and try to take advantage of the opportunities which they present to us of exercising the virtues of faith, love, charity, and mercy, so that we may be able to bring some little comfort and happiness into the dark lives around us. To become God-like, all our virtues must be brought out, consequently we must admit that that is indeed a true mercy that best enables us to arrive at the desired goal. Let us take comfort in the words of Robert Browning in his "La Saisiaz,"

> "Reap this life's success or failure, soon shall things be unperplexed,
> And the right and wrong now tangled, lie unravelled in the next."

Boulogne-sur-mer. R. M. BRYCE-THOMAS.

MINUTES OF BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE.

THE opening session of the semi-annual conference was held at the Handsworth Picture Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday, March 10th, 1912, at 10:30 a.m. There was a good attendance of saints, friends and investigators. President Rudger Clawson, of the European mission; President L. E. Williams, of the Manchester conference; Elders William J. Sessions, Wilford C. Brimley and Washburn C. Hunter, of the Nottingham conference; President Albert T. Smith, eighteen elders and one lady missionary of the Birmingham conference were also present.

Prayer was offered by Elder Joseph H. Davis. Sacrament was administered by Elders George Hamp and Philip C. Reynolds.

President Albert T. Smith, in welcoming the congregation, said that their presence was evidence that they were interested in the work of the Lord. Hoped that what would be said during the conference would cause them to meditate upon their standing with the Lord, and create a desire to know and obey the truth as it is contained in the gospel.

Elder Alfred Fallows showed that Christ's saying, "It is finished," does not justify anyone in rejecting modern revelation. We are all God's children and need His Fatherly guidance. This is a day of prophets and revelation and the Lord's promises are being fulfilled.

Elder David E. Howard spoke of the necessity of authority from

God in performing works pertaining to His gospel. We cannot expect salvation through the teachings of unauthorized men. Attention was called to the sons of Sceva failing to cast out evil spirits owing to lack of authority.

Miss Lucy Hartopp sang "Calvary."

President Clawson compared the conditions under which we were assembled with those of other churches, and explained the purpose of meeting in a conference. He read a clipping which showed how family religion was passing from the people in England, and said, "It is a deplorable fact that family prayers are being neglected." Prayer is powerful and should be observed unceasingly. In analyzing the first four "Articles of Faith," he said that God is love. This is the greatest passion in man. Jesus Christ is a direct manifestation of the Father. The speaker read and commented upon an authentic description of the Savior. Said we are responsible for our own sins and must stand on our own foundation. The atonement of Christ affects every soul who will be subject to His laws. After having faith in God, we must repent of our sins and be baptized for their remission in order to inherit the kingdom of God. Jesus and His disciples and the prophets of old spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. This power is lost to the world to-day.

Prayer by Elder Harper W. Noble.

In the afternoon, after the opening exercises, prayer being offered by Elder P. C. Reynolds, the secretary presented the general and local authorities, who were sustained unanimously.

President L. E. Williams (Manchester conference) said that time would not permit him to discourse at length upon the gospel truths, but every moment of the time was profitable to those present. Referred to the moral teachings of the Latter-day Saints and their willingness to sacrifice all for the saving of souls. Bore a strong testimony to the truth of the latter-day work.

Solo, "In His Steps," by Miss Lizzie Bennett.

President Clawson said he had attended many services in other churches and respected each man in his worship If in such services a man does not abide the laws of the land let the law handle him. He was interested in the important questions of the day. England has no time to worry about the "Mormon" question; however, we are quite willing to let our case rest with the Government. It is said that the Church leaders are tyrannical, but this is successfully refuted by the fact that they are all sustained by common consent. In claiming that we have a prophet to lead us, surely we are entitled to our belief. The Lord placed the different officers in the Church, as Paul informs us, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith." (Eph. 4: 13). One who says they are no longer needed repudiates the Apostle Paul. The thirteenth "Article of Faith" was quoted and comment offered to point out the misunderstanding the world has regarding the laws of morality among the Latter-day Saints.

Prayer by Elder Albert Smith.

The congregation in the evening numbered three hundred and thirty. Prayer was offered by Elder Amasa R. Howard.

President Albert T. Smith was gratified in seeing such a good attendance, and said we must thoroughly understand the gospel in order to prepare ourselves for the life hereafter. We love Jesus because of the great sacrifice He made for our sakes. The connection between the mission of John the Baptist and that of Christ was clearly shown. He testified that the gospel had been restored to the earth to dispel the darkness of apostasy.

"The Heavenly Song" was sung by Miss Lillie Roskrow.

Sister Sarah A. Howard testified that the gospel had been restored and that those who are familiar with the Church know that the gifts and blessings enjoyed anciently are prevalent among the Latter-day Saints. We should not live for earthly gain, but our aspirations should be for a crown of eternal life, that we may be among the Lord's jewels and receive the plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord."

Elder Alvin Sessions spoke of the power of truth and bore testimony to the divinity of the work.

Solo by Charles C. Edwards, "My Mother's Bible."

President Clawson referred to the solo just sung and spoke of the love we have for the Bible. We defend it and preach from it, not forcing our principles upon any one, but always being willing to teach the searcher for truth. Dwelt at some length upon the manner in which the Latter-day Saints carry the gospel message to the people. When a man was working for the Lord, he ought to do it willingly and earnestly. The gospel is sounding to all people who will listen. Our invitation to the world is, "Come, let us reason together." Enmity should not exist among men. Referred to the attack being made upon the Latter-day Saints by *Tit-Bits*, in the form of a serial story, entitled "The Sin of Utah," a fiction by Miss Winifred Graham. Denounced it as infamous, and pointed to several glaring falsehoods which had already appeared in said vile story. Although it was advertised simply as a fiction, the plain intention was to mislead people as to conditions in Utah. President Clawson said he had written *Tit-Bits* in answer to this outrageous tirade, but his letter was rejected and returned.

President Smith thanked all who had assisted in making the conference a success.

The doxology was sung, and the benediction was pronounced by Elder R. Elgan Barber.

On Saturday, March 9th, President Clawson met with the elders in Priesthood meeting, which was a most interesting and instructive occasion. A number of important questions were propounded and answered.

ALVIN SESSIONS, Clerk of Conference.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1912.

EDITORIAL.

THE GOSPEL OF HARMONY.

THE attainment of perfect harmony may be said to be the highest ideal in life. It should be the universal desire to rightly understand and to conform our hopes and aims to the eternal plan. A positive knowledge of the Divine purpose in the world and in the life of man is absolutely necessary to that end. Happily our Heavenly Father has never left the world entirely in darkness concerning His purposes. From the earliest period of man's probationary life on earth some measure of knowledge has been given him as to the Divine intention in the world. Immediately on the expulsion of our first parents from the garden of Eden, the Lord instructed them as to His purposes as well as their own individual duties. It was necessary for the trial, development and eternal exaltation of our race that the earth-harmony of things should be broken by the fall. When that important event took place, our first parents were given the promise of ultimate redemption and the means by which it should be accomplished. We learn that the gospel was preached in very early times, but that the people were unable to live up to its requirements. They were consequently given a lesser law, which was intended to teach and lead them to a fuller understanding of the great scheme of human redemption. When they yielded obedience to this lesser law, the children of Israel secured the favor of God and were brought into harmony with the Divine will.

When the meridian of time came, however, the gospel plan was revealed to man in its fulness, and he was taught the principles through obedience to which his sins would be remitted, and his mind and heart be changed, so that he might live in complete harmony with the will and law of God. Those who received the gospel of Christ were enabled to read the facts of life aright. They learned of their heavenly origin, and of their true relationship to the eternal past as well as to the eternal future. Through obedience to the gospel they become reconciled to God and learned His purpose in their earthly lives. As a seal of their union with Him, they received the Holy Ghost, which was to dwell with them, and be a continual guide and companion, until they would become perfect, and thus in entire harmony with the Divine will. No

former teacher or philosopher had been able to give the world a true and satisfactory knowledge of the purpose of man's life or his relationship to God and the universe. It was unknown to man—beyond the utmost reach of the human mind, and unless the Lord would reveal it, the world must have remained in ignorance of these important truths. But God revealed Himself in Christ, who was duly commissioned to make known the truth as to His Father's will and purposes. The blessings and joy that knowledge brought to those who received it, and lived in harmony therewith, we may in a measure learn from their beautiful experiences as recorded in the New Testament.

The hearts of men were stirred in opposition to the truth of heaven. By its light the inferiority of their systems became apparent, and their standing and influence was placed in jeopardy. The contest was fierce, long-continued and decisive. The forces of evil, as prophets had predicted, triumphed for a time, and instead of truth and harmony, error and confusion attained universal sway. But the immortal documents that contained a record of the teaching of Christ and His apostles were handed down through the ages, and earnest seekers after truth read and studied them, and testified to their inherent truth and power. All through the long, intervening centuries, earnest and susceptible souls caught stray notes of the heavenly harmony that had found expression in the Holy Scriptures, and they longed for fuller light and knowledge. The apostles and prophets having all passed away or been put to death, and the revealing Spirit withdrawn, men of learning arose claiming to interpret the sacred records. But they differed widely, and church contended with church, until darkness and confusion prevailed everywhere. Throughout the dark ages, it is true, many an earnest mind endeavoured to solve the problem of life, to reconcile the conflicting facts of human experience, and point the way to that peace and harmony for which they longed. But all was of little avail. The mind of man could not rise to a conception of the eternal plan, and without such knowledge, man could not see the present life in its true relations. A survey of the religious and philosophical literature of the world shows the endless toil, the boundless speculations, and the darkness and difficulty to which it all led. Meanwhile many earnest souls, greater than human creeds and environments, and impatient under their limitations, looked out upon a universe of law and order, and wondered why there was no knowledge attainable that would bring to them a consciousness of harmony commensurate with their apparent rank in the scale of being.

After the long night of human ignorance and confusion, a heavenly messenger, foreseen in apocalyptic vision by the seer of Patmos, wended his way to earth, bearing the joyful tidings that the time had come for the Eternal One to restore the long-lost knowledge of the true plan of life. Again and again the self-same

heavenly messenger came, with additional words of life and truth, and was followed by prophets and apostles of other days, who restored the keys and authority which gave to men renewed access to celestial worlds on high. What a change this meant in the religious life of the world! Doctrines and principles which aforetime had been hard to understand and were variously interpreted, now became clear and intelligible. Some that appeared to be directly opposed are seen, in the light of the revelations now received, to blend in harmonious unity. The ordinances and covenants that had been changed or broken, as predicted of old, were revealed anew, and brought to those who were willing to receive them, the light and joy, and gifts and blessings that were enjoyed of old and that are the inalienable heritage of the Church of God in all ages. Man is seen to be no vile worm of the dust, as a spurious theology had designated him, possessing capacity and aspirations for things unattainable; but the honored child of Deity, to whom all heights and depths, all knowledge, joy and power are freely offered, on the conditions that eternal law prescribes. The dark problems as to human character that had seemed to be inconsistent with Infinite Justice are solved, and present conditions are seen to be the natural result of an eternal past. It is no longer necessary to look forward to the future with feelings of apprehension or dread, for it is seen to be an eternal pathway, leading to ever-increasing heights of love and wisdom, joy and power. The wide world is peopled with the children of the self-same Father, whose plan of life contemplates and has made adequate provision for their temporal and eternal welfare. In the light of heavenly truth thus revealed anew to earth, the past, the present and the future stand harmoniously related to each other; and lovers of God and truth rejoice that they have been privileged to see the happy day when the eternal plan is known and taught to man. After the darkness and confusion of centuries, it is indeed a glorious privilege to receive revelations and inspired counsels from the Lord, in the light of which the apparent mysteries and inharmonies of life are seen to be the occasional discordant notes made by those who are acquiring, through many a failure, a knowledge of the laws of that eternal harmony which is the ultimate goal of all creation.

The Latter-day Saints are the proud possessors of a knowledge of the Divine plan that reveals the true nature, relationship and destiny of man. While the world at large is vainly trying to think out the truth concerning these momentous questions, they have gratefully received the revelations and commandments that God has given them, and are humbly endeavoring to live in harmony therewith. They have received the true gospel of Christ, and by it have been lifted to a higher plane. Their conception of life recognizes the utility of every power and function inherent in man, as a child of God, and they are gradually learning more and

more of that perfect plan through which alone man may become perfect even as his "Father which is in heaven is perfect." The Latter-day Saints have given to the world conclusive evidence of the higher light and guidance to which they lay claim. Intelligent and impartial men of various beliefs have willingly testified to some undeniable evidences of that higher civilization to which the counsels of God are pointing the way. The world may take umbrage at the claim of Divine revelation and guidance, but their attitude merely excludes them from sharing in the joy of possessing the truth, and contributing to its advancement. Despite misunderstanding and opposition, the Latter-day Saints will continue to labor unselfishly to bless and enlighten the world. Their labors will be blessed of the Lord, as they have hitherto been. "Mormonism," which is now a by-word and a reproach, under the direction of Almighty God, is building up the kingdom foretold by prophets of old, through which light and blessings shall ultimately come to all the world.

H. I.

CONVENTION OF CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS.

(Concluded from page 159.)

The closing session of the convention opened at 9 o'clock on Friday morning. Singing, "Zion stands with hills surrounded." Prayer by President T. C. Jones. Singing, "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness."

Elder Hugh Ireland said he had enjoyed the meetings of the convention very much. He appreciated the excellent spirit that prevailed and the motives by which the presidents were governed—a spirit of love for their fellow-men and a desire to labor for the glory of God. The possession of these was certain to lead to success. He desired to remind the presidents and elders of the necessity of urging the saints and others to subscribe for the *Millennial Star*. It had proved to be an effective medium of getting the gospel message before the people, and the co-operation of all was needed that it might continue its mission of light and usefulness.

President Joel Richards said he found that different ideas were entertained as to reporting under the head of "Hours spent with members." Some counted time spent talking with members in halls after meetings under that head; others included socials and outings. He thought some rule should be agreed upon that would secure uniformity in their reports.

After considerable discussion, President Joel Richards moved that socials, with opening and closing exercises, be counted as meetings; that conversations with members in halls after meetings, and also pleasure trips do not count; but that time spent going to and coming from members' homes be included in "Time spent with members."

The motion was carried unanimously.

President T. C. Jones suggested that the Old and New Testaments, with Elder L. A. Kelsch's "Practical Reference," be bound together for use by the elders. Frequent reference to the Old Testament was very necessary, and, as it was expensive and inconvenient to carry both books with them, he thought this compilation should take the place of the New Testament and "Ready Reference," now generally used.

The suggestion was favorably received. After some discussion, President Albert T. Smith moved that the Old and New Testaments, with concordance, and Elder Kelsch's "Practical Reference," be bound together and kept on sale at headquarters.

The motion was carried unanimously.

President J. E. Salisbury called attention to the fact that the elders and saints from the different conferences and missions were accustomed to meet in social reunions, at Salt Lake City, at the semi-annual conferences there. He thought much good could be done if the saints in Zion, who had emigrated from these countries, would write or report to the conference presidents or elders here the names and addresses of friends and relatives in this country, that they might be visited by the elders.

President Joel Richards—Can those who hold the lesser priesthood officiate in any way in administering to the sick?

President Clawson—Under certain conditions they might do so. They could anoint and pray, in the absence of an elder; but they could not seal the anointing or bless in the name of the priesthood. They could not administer the ordinance, but merely anoint and offer up the prayer of faith. It is not their right thus to act if an elder be present.

A number of questions on various matters were asked and satisfactorily answered.

President Clawson said the convention which was about to close was one of the best they had yet held. The discussions had been very profitable. All the subjects had been of direct interest to them in their work. They had come to see very much alike on all matters. He endorsed the idea that the presidents should visit the branches each and all that they had labored in before returning home. He was pleased to learn that they had succeeded so well in combatting the misrepresentations of the moving picture shows. Mr. Peet had done a good work through the reward tract which had been issued, of which 173,000 had already been distributed. Used in connection with the "Moving Picture" tract, it had been a great help to the missionaries in meeting the misrepresentations of their enemies. They must keep up the fight all along the line. Very great care should be exercised in selecting companions for the elders. It was their duty to emphasize especially the Book of Mormon. As to candidates for baptism, it should be made certain that they are ready and worthy, and

understand the importance of the step they are taking. Outgoing presidents should see that everything was in good order. They should try to leave no unsettled business. The presidents had done a good work. When saints move from one conference to another, let them take removal notices. The presidents represented two hundred and eighty-four elders. They were in that convention to speak and legislate for them. The principle of sacrifice was the moving cause in their work. It was the only principle that would render their labors acceptable to the Lord. He rejoiced exceedingly in the spirit of love and union that had been manifest throughout their meetings. He looked for a time of rejoicing during the coming conferences. Their conventions were getting better and had become a necessity.

In conclusion, President Clawson said—I bless you and your loved ones in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. May you be blessed in all your ways. The providences of God are over you and you will be upheld by His power and prospered. Things will come around and be accomplished that will astonish you. I bless you, by the authority of the Holy Priesthood, that you may be strengthened and sustained in all your good desires. I bless Brother McCann who is leaving—his work is accepted of the Lord—and the brethren who will leave before another convention. I have learned to love you and to value your labors. The missionary spirit will go with you through life. It is the spirit of love, of peace, and happiness. May God bless you. Amen.

The convention was brought to a close by singing, "Come, let us anew." Benediction by President Rudger Clawson.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Netherlands-Belgium Mission.—President Roscoe W. Eardley, of the Netherlands-Belgium mission, writing under date Rotterdam, March 1st, 1912, referring to the previous month's work, says:—"There is a decided improvement in our field. One pleasing feature is that there were baptisms in every conference. In Belgium, where our work is the hardest, we have just added five splendid members—three men and two women. Aside from one case of sickness, the elders are all feeling well, are enjoying their work, and are determined to do all in their power to spread the truth in this country."

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held at the Corporation Baths, Burnley (Liverpool conference), on Saturday, March 2nd, 1912, at which eight souls were initiated into the fold of Christ, three from the Lancaster branch, and five from Burnley. Elders Newtown R. Jackson and Alma J. Larkin officiated.

A baptismal service was held at "Deseret," London, on Friday,

February 29th, 1912, when one soul was added to the fold of Christ, Elder G. O. Stoddard officiating.

On Sunday, March 3rd, 1912, a baptismal service was held at "Deseret," London, at which three persons joined themselves to the Church of Christ by baptism, Elders Leo M. Coombs and W. A. Brown officiating.

Releases and Departures.—Elder R. T. Dahlquist of the Swedish mission, has been honorably released and sailed for home March 1st, 1912, per s.s. *Virginian*. The following named missionaries have been honorably released and sailed for home March 7th, 1912, per s.s. *Corsican*: From Great Britain—W. B. Park, Oliver Bryson, John C. Cairns, Elmer W. Smith, Hyrum B. Harris, Joseph P. Burt. From Sweden—Albin E. Johnson, Victor E. Peterson. From Switzerland and Germany—Godfrey C. Klingler, George E. Bürgi, Samuel E. Bringhurst. The company, which included four emigrants, was in charge of Elders Joseph P. Burt, Oliver Bryson and Samuel E. Bringhurst.

District Meetings.—On Sunday, February 25th, 1912, President J. B. Walkley and seven traveling elders of the London conference held a district meeting at Portsmouth. Meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m., and after the opening exercises and the presenting of the general and local authorities, Elder M. H. Kirk spoke upon the mission of the Holy Ghost. Elder A. J. Sperry pointed out the necessity and efficacy of repentance. Elder J. S. Storey dwelt on the necessity of obedience to the principles of the gospel. The evening meeting commenced at 6:30. The hall was filled with saints and friends. Elder C. L. Smith spoke upon the necessity of having an active faith which leads to doing the will of God. Sister Emma Walkley spoke of conditions in Utah, and bore a strong testimony to the divinity of the gospel. Elder William H. Tingey said revelation is the foundation stone of the Church, and is necessary for its guidance. Elder George O. Stoddard spoke upon the divinity of the Book of Mormon, and said it is indispensable as a witness to Christ's mission on the earth. President James B. Walkley said he knew this was the only true Church of Christ upon the earth, and the world at some time must acknowledge this fact. The services were made very pleasant by a sextet composed of members of the branch.

A successful district meeting was held in the York branch (Hull conference) on Sunday, February 25th, 1912. President Bernard Parry and Elders Edward Williams, Homer J. Brown, H. B. Harris, W. T. Patrick and Charles A. Walters were present, the last two being the branch elders. Some good instructions were given, and the meetings were enjoyed by all present.

Successful Socials.—On Tuesday, February 27th, 1912, a successful

social was held at Etherington Street meeting place, Gainsboro' (Hull conference), in honor of Elder Elmer W. Smith, who has been honorably released to return home. An excellent program was rendered, after which a beautiful dressing case was presented to Elder Smith by the saints and friends. Those present spent a very enjoyable evening, and all joined in wishing Elder Smith God-speed on his homeward journey.

The saints and friends of the Nuneaton branch (Birmingham conference) gave a "tea" and social on Saturday evening, February 17th, 1912, in honor of Sister Sarah A. Howard and Elders A. R. Howard and D. E. Howard, who will return to Zion in a short time. A good program was rendered, which included some interesting games. A very enjoyable time was had. There were about ninety persons present.

On Saturday evening, February 17th, 1912, a social was held in the Keighley branch of the Leeds conference, and was well attended by the saints and friends. A splendid program was rendered. Refreshments were afterwards served by the Relief Society. A number of interesting games were participated in by all, and the evening was an enjoyable one throughout.

An enjoyable social was held at "Deseret," on February 19th, 1912, in honor of Elder Leo M. Coombs, who has been released from his position as choir conductor. The evening was spent in singing and other musical numbers. Elder Coombs was presented with a gold-mounted baton from the North London choir. He expressed his appreciation and thanks to the members, and said it would always remind him of his pleasant associations with the choir. After singing, "The time is far spent," all departed with pleasant memories of the evening.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR THEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

Lesson XXX.—Preparing for the Sacrifice.

I. The Return to Jerusalem.

1. Brief stay at Bethany. (a) Time of arrival—about a week before the Passover. (John 12:1.) (b) A supper prepared in His honor (verse 2). (c) He is anointed for His burial (verses 3-8; compare Matt. 26:12).
2. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19.)
3. Second cleansing of the temple. (Matt. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48. Compare the earlier cleansing of the sacred house, at the beginning of His public ministry. (John 2:14-17.)
4. His authority challenged. (Matt. 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8.)

II. Instructions and Predictions.

1. Parable of the wicked husbandmen. (Matt. 21 : 33-41.)
2. Parable of the marriage feast. (Matt. 22 : 1-14.) The lesson common to these two parables is the assured rejection of the unworthy.
3. The great commandment. (Matt. 22 : 34-40; compare Luke 10 : 27.) (a) The lawyer's question. (b) The Savior's reply.—A summary of the law.
4. The widow's mite. (Mark 12 : 41-44; Luke 21 : 1-4.)
5. The destruction of the temple foretold. (Matt. 24 : 1, 2; Mark 13 : 1, 2; Luke 21 : 5, 6.)
6. Calamity and destruction to precede the second advent of Christ. (Matt. 24 : 4-51; Mark chap. 13; Luke 21 : 5-38. Compare version of Matt. 24 as given in Pearl of Great Price, Writings of Joseph Smith.)

DIED.

Armstrong.—At Mansfield, February 23rd, 1912, Ann Thompson Armstrong, aged 57; born January 2nd, 1855; baptized 1898 by Elder Joseph Udall. She was a faithful Latter-day Saint. Funeral services were held at Mansfield Cemetery, February 27th, with Elder John H. Watkins in charge.

Carter.—At Friday Bridge (Norwich conference), February 20th, 1912, Ann Carter, the beloved wife of William Carter; born May 8th, 1837; baptized August 6th, 1911, by Elder V. D. Walker.

Cole.—At Blackheath (Birmingham conference), February 14th, 1912, Florence Elizabeth Cole, the beloved daughter of Brother and Sister Benjamin Cole, aged one year and eight months.

Cross.—February 17th, 1912, at Hull, Sister Susannah Clarke Cross, aged 61 years; baptized February 16th, 1901, by Elder Isaac Wagstaff. Deceased lived and died a faithful Latter-day Saint.

Hooper.—At Holloway, London, N., February 8th, 1912, Brother William John Hooper; born May 29th, 1850; baptized August 5th, 1909, by Elder Daniel F. O. Norris. He was a faithful Latter-day Saint.

Riste.—At Derby, February 17th, 1912, Brother Hiram Frederick Riste; born at Leek, April 4th, 1832; baptized October 13th, 1904, at Derby, by Elder Emuel Bachman.

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